

From GEDS to PhDs



## LIFETIME

Low-Income Families'  
Empowerment through Education

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To: Congressman Jim McDermott, House of Representatives Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support

My name is Helda Moya and I'm a single mother of three girls. Last year I lost my job and my unemployment benefits recently ran out. I support my children on \$814 a month, which is \$661 in social security for one of my daughters, and \$150 in child support for my other daughter. CalWORKs told me I don't qualify for help any more because my children received welfare for five years. Because of my immigration status, I didn't receive welfare when my children did. However, my immigration status has changed, so last year I received TANF/CalWORKs for a month or two, while I was working. Now that I'm not working and no longer qualify for unemployment, they say I'm not eligible. They also denied me food stamps for my family because they said that my income of \$814/month is too much. There are no jobs right now, so I really struggle month to month to provide food for my children. Also, I have utility bills to take care of this month, and I need to buy a bus pass for my fourteen year old daughter so she can go to school every day, and no way to pay for this.

I don't have daycare for my youngest daughter Natalie who is six years old, so I can't look for work. LIFETIME is helping me reapply for CalWORKs benefits, so I can get a paid work experience job that my county created with economic stimulus funding, and help with childcare. Then I'll be able to work and pay my bills and feed my kids. But if our Governor eliminates CalWORKs, which he wants to do, there will be nothing out there for mothers like me. I know there are a lot of parents like me who are going through the same problem or worse.

I've also been a victim of domestic violence for a few years now by the father of my youngest daughter. I had a restraining order against him which he violated a number of times. Now we are living with him because we ended up homeless. Every day he threatens and verbally abuses me and my children, making my life much more miserable than it already is. I learned through LIFETIME CalWORKs has the Family Violence Option so mothers like me can get special help with domestic violence. My caseworker knows this, but still denied my family CalWORKs. So please help make TANF/CalWORKs a better program, because it can make a big difference in the lives of low income families like mine.

Sincerely,

Helda Moya  
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